

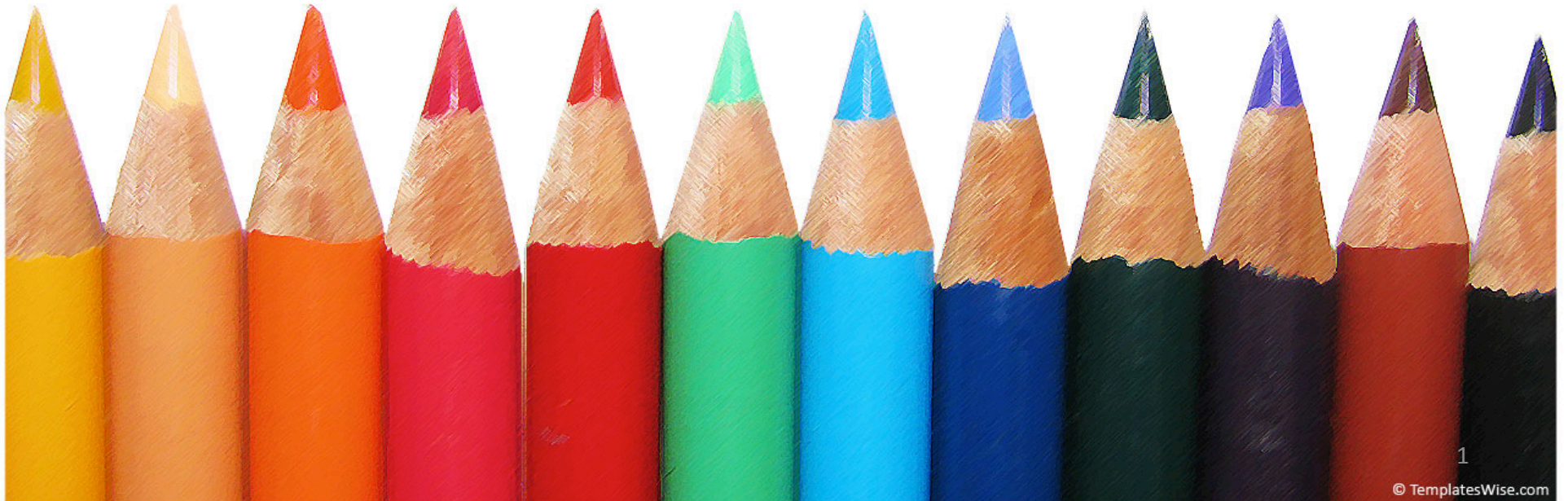
Creative Healing

Using expressive therapies and activities with individual clients, groups & communities

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Flowers are red

- Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHm2KdTTKUw&sns=em>
- How do we help clients see the colors of the rainbow?



Objectives

- Review ways to support client art projects and offer healing arts activities within existing therapies
- Practice creative healing activities
- Understand how creative arts relate to healing, mastery, and learning
- Review benefits and samples of:
 - Visual arts as expression and learning
 - Community visual arts projects
 - Movement and dance expression
 - Use of expressive writing
 - Music as calming tool, expression, and healing

Warm-Up

- Scribble Activity
- Letting go of making it perfect



Supporting Client Art

- Be flexible (flowers and everything else can be any color)
- Let the client work it out (don't automatically block or rescue)
- Offer reflective questions rather than interpretation
- The client is the master of his/her project
- Practicing not judging yourself helps you not judge your client



Supporting Client Art ctd.

- It doesn't need to “look like,” “be like,” or “sound like” anything
- Try activities first yourself to develop empathy and get ideas
- Provide positive reinforcement at appropriate level for your client
- Neither you nor your client need to be perfect; there's more value in imperfection anyway



Building Mastery

- Some clients may already have an art interest or may take off quickly once they discover it
- These clients can use art as a building competency/mastery tool and may be more focused on improving than expressing (but may still be doing both along the way)
- Mastery is used in DBT therapy to improve self esteem and overall life satisfaction
- Some clients effectively use art interest to distract from symptoms



Client Art Samples

- *Visit our session to see real client artwork!*



Mastery & Flow

- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

- “Flow occurs when we are engaged in a creative activity where we engage in the process of performing a task, immersed in the feeling of focus and full engagement...”
- “...when we engage our creativity we achieve a sense of satisfaction and pleasure.”

Quotes from “Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention”

Related Resources: “Authentic Happiness” and “Flourish” both by Martin Seligman, VIACharacter.org (Character Strengths Free Survey & Resources)



Expressing

- Creative arts offer clients ways beyond verbal words to express thoughts, emotions, goals, dreams, and concepts
- Not everyone expresses best out loud with traditional language
- Creative expression can supplement traditional talk therapy
- You don't need to label a feeling or experience to have it (Winton-Henry)
- Expression connects with mindfulness and body awareness

Client Art Samples

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Visual Arts Expression

- Trauma-Focused CBT uses individualized expressive techniques as the exposure element to help survivors overcome PTSD. The project can be story-writing, art, poetry, etc. (TFCBT.musc.edu)
- Other visual arts have been shown to benefit those dealing with diagnoses of cancer, heart disease, and reduction of stress for other physical diagnoses (Ross et al.; Reynolds & Lim)
- Ongoing anecdotal evidence of benefits of visual arts in self-directed and therapeutic forms; further studies are needed
- Related Resources:
 - American Art Therapy Association: arttherapy.org
 - Foundation for Art & Healing: artandhealing.org
 - “Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain” (for art skills groups and those who want to make representative art)

Visual Arts Ideas

- Art Journaling: Combining words and images
 - Expressivearts.com, Lucia Cappacchione, “Recovery of Your Inner Child”
- Painting
- Drawing
- Sculpting
- Mixed Media
- Community Projects

Practice: Inside Out Activity

1. On one side of your paper, draw images or words of what you look like on the outside to others
2. When done, flip your paper over and draw images or words of what you feel like on the inside
3. Discuss with a partner – in your own work, do you notice similarities between the inside and outside? Differences? If very different, then why?

Visual Arts in Learning

- Art with individuals and groups can help reinforce concepts
- Examples:
 - DBT skills educational posters
 - Feeling awareness
 - Grounding stones
 - Art worksheets
 - Other ideas?



Overcoming Stigma Art Projects

- Pillows of Unrest (2009, 2010, 2012)
 - Pillow cases
- See Inside of Me (2011)
 - T-shirts
- Pillows of Hope (2013)
 - Pillow cases
- More traditional art (2014)
- Covered in Hope (2015)
 - quilt

Client Art Samples

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Dance & Movement Expression

- Movement therapies have shown quality of life benefits from Tai Chi (Greenspan et al.), improved cognitive functioning in elderly after theater arts program (Noice et al.) and benefits for women using creative movement (Picard)
- Recent studies are looking at dance and the brain, and its benefits for Parkinsons patients (Earhart)
- Anecdotal reports show benefits for Interplay “body wisdom” program for groups/communities
 - Related Resource: Interplay.org

Interplay: Body Wisdom

- Practice: Warm-Up Movements
- Improv Performance Video: Danger
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-DL9W1hFLc&sns=em>
- Closest Groups/Programs:
 - Kansas City, Webster Groves, Chicago
- Online Programs
 - Interplay.org
- Helping Professionals Programs
 - Developing in different areas
 - Soulplay.org, Cathy Ann Beaty

Music as Therapy

- Music listening & improvisation offers stress relief and physical relief in the moment (Guzzetta; White; Burns et al.), longer benefits for cancer pain (Beck), and potential benefits for victims of violence (Teague, et al.)
- Hip Hop Therapy has helped young men of color facilitate positive change (Raphael) and access mental health services (brl-inc.org)
 - Video: Beat, Rhymes, and Life
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GydbY9mY61Q&sns=em>
- Related Resources:
 - Musictherapy.org
 - Brl-inc.org (Beat Rhymes and Life)

Music Idea

- Ask clients to create his/her own “soundtrack of my life.”
- He picks songs that represent major life struggles as well as positive experiences
- She then can write narratives, poems, or his/her own songs to go with it
- This can help facilitate discussion of life events and their meaning, and can help anxious clients ease in to therapy

Expressive Writing

- Writing therapy helps those with chronic illness (Graham et al.) and trauma experiences (Esterling et al.; McArdle & Byrt; Pennebaker) have improved immune functions and less need for medical care
- Further studies are needed
- Books to help with expressive writing:
 - The Artist's Way
 - Writing Down your Soul
 - Writing Down the Bones

Expressive Writing Ideas

- Freewriting with or without prompts (no stopping, continued writing, no judging for grammar or editing during the process)
- Letters to or about lost loved ones, letters to higher power, letters to inner child, letters to body parts in pain (Cappachione)
- Continuing dialogue with each of the above, using dominant/non-dominant hand (Cappachione)
- Assign journal prompts
- In sessions, as homework, as group projects

More Sample expressive activities

- Paint your “safe place” with great detail
- Draw a picture of what it felt like before, during, and after a scary experience; discuss or journal about your drawings
- Freewrite for 10 minutes on a writing prompt (hopes and dreams, fears, favorite life experience, etc.)
- Sculpt your inner child; then write a letter with what you want to tell her as your adult self
- Create a shape with your body of what it feels like to be happy, then sad, free, scared, hopeful, etc.



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Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, a Web Based Learning Course, tfcbt.musc.edu

Winton-Henry, Cynthia, Interplay Life Practice Program in Kansas City, in-person, 2016; *interplay warmup activities shared with permission*

Resources

Videos:

Flowers are Red: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHm2KdTTKUw&sns=em

Interplay: Wing it! Danger: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-DL9W1hFLc&sns=em>

Beats, Rhymes, and Life Showcase: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GydbY9mY61Q&sns=em>

Websites:

American Art Therapy Association: arttherapy.org

American Music Therapy Association: Musictherapy.org

Beats, Rhymes and Life: BRL-inc.org

Cathy Ann Beauty: Soulplay.org

Foundation for Art & Healing: artandhealing.org

Character Strengths: VIACaracter.org

Books:

Authentic Happiness

The Artist's Way

Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain

Flourish

The Lotus & the Lily

Recovery of your Inner Child

Writing Down your Soul

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